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After 350 million years, cockroaches are here to stay

By DAVID BEHRENS
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The *Cockroach Combat Manual* tells us everything we ever wanted to know about the pest but were too polite to ask. For the layman, the amateur bug-swatter, it is the definitive roach opus, a work motivated by neither love nor fear but something more like respect, awe and a pinch of disgust.

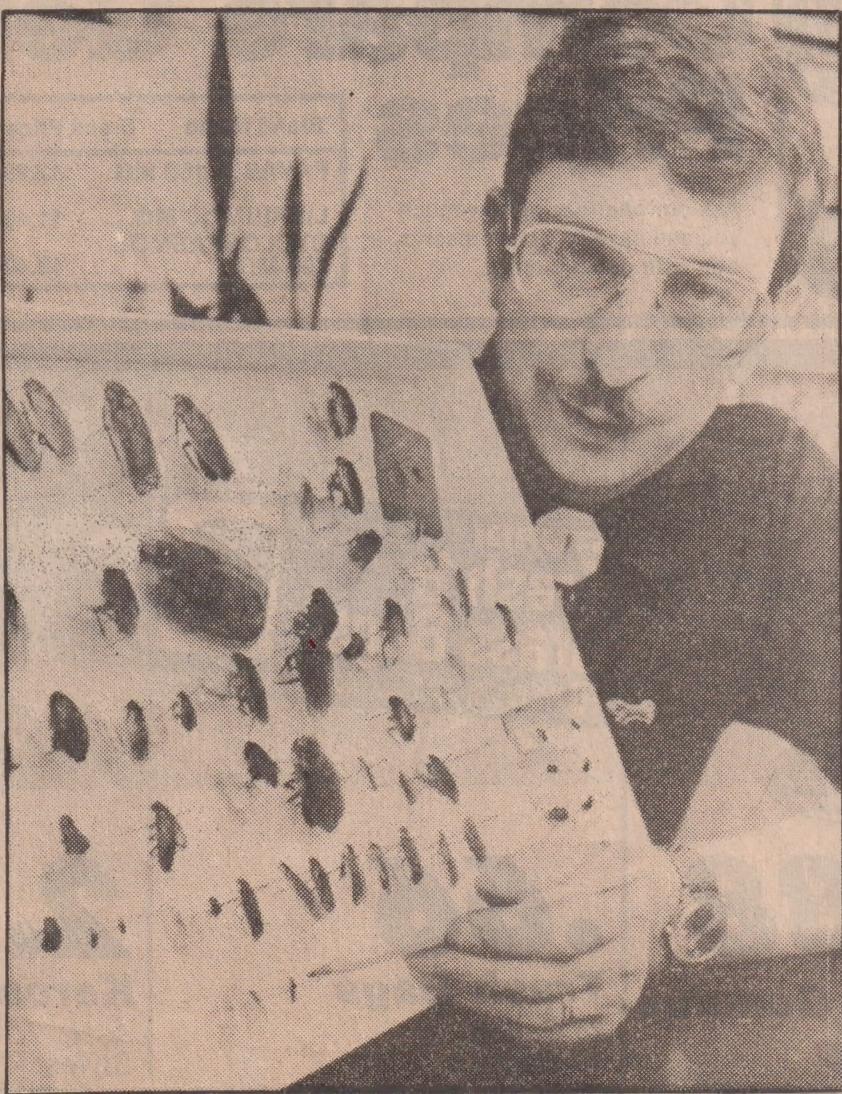
It takes an ominous look at the sweep of evolution — but it is also funny, quite an achievement when it comes to cockroaches. And when it comes to cockroaches, they are definitely here to stay, according to author Austin Frishman.

In an illustration on the title page — among more than 60 comic drawings by Robert W. Powell — a lowly roach is portrayed as a prizefighter, standing in his corner, with boxing gloves on four of his arms — two of them raised in victory.

It is a fitting vision. For more than 350 million years, the cockroach has grown accustomed to success, Frishman observes with academic detachment.

A professor of entomology, he has been teaching for the past 14 years at the New York State Agricultural and Technical College in Farmingdale. His manual, written in a breezy style with co-author Arthur P. Schwartz and decorated with Powell's whimsical pen-and-ink drawings, is a serious look at the life and times of the cockroach — and how to keep him from taking over your house and pantry.

Chapters are devoted to such items as roach evolution, roach sociology



Austin Frishman with a variety of roach specimens

Newsday photo